

**Marine Mammal Commission**  
**Announcement of Funding Opportunity**  
**Request for Proposals**

**Title:** Marine Mammal and Marine Ecosystem Conservation

**Purpose:** The U.S. Marine Mammal Commission is seeking pre-proposals for research and related activities that will **further the conservation and management goals of the Marine Mammal Protection Act**. The intent is to support focused efforts that will supplement rather than supplant the research efforts of other agencies and organizations.

The evaluation process will occur in two steps. The first step will involve submission and evaluation of **pre-proposals**. The second will involve submission and evaluation of full proposals **only from investigators who have been notified that their pre-proposals have been accepted**. In 2004, the Commission received 128 pre-proposals, requested 47 full proposals, and provided support for 14 projects. The proportion of submitted pre-proposals that are accepted and funded by the Commission may change in 2005, depending on the number of proposals submitted and the availability of funding. Past projects supported by the Commission generally have ranged from \$5,000 to \$40,000, although more expensive projects will be considered. Recipients of funding are welcome to submit additional proposals for funding in subsequent years. Pre-proposals and full proposals that are not funded in 2005 may be reconsidered for funding by the Commission in subsequent fiscal years. The Commission reserves the right to award a limited number of grants or contracts, to limit the awards to certain subject areas, and to limit the dollar amount of any award. Grantees or contractors whose projects involve the taking of marine mammals will be expected to obtain all necessary permits and authorizations for their projects before engaging in such activities.

Marine Mammal Commission priorities, selection criteria, required formats for pre- and full proposals, the submission process, and the submission schedule are described below.

**Priorities:** The Commission will consider proposals that address diverse issues relevant to marine mammals and associated marine ecosystem research and conservation. The Commission will give priority to projects that address the following general subject areas:

- Detection, investigation, and/or mitigation of important conservation issues for marine mammals;
- Research essential for recovery of endangered, threatened, or depleted species;
- The ecology of killer whales in the North Pacific Ocean and, in particular, the potential impact of killer whale predation on marine mammal species or stocks;
- The ecology of Arctic marine mammals, particularly the response of marine mammals to changing climate conditions, including the collection of baseline data on important components of Arctic marine ecosystems; and
- The role of disease, harmful algal blooms, and/or contaminants in the population dynamics of marine mammals.

**Pre-proposal selection criteria:** Pre-proposals will be evaluated by members of the Marine Mammal Commission staff and a subcommittee of the Commission's Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals. The following factors will be considered in reviewing pre-proposals (relative weights are indicated by point values that sum to 100):

- Relevance to Commission priorities identified above (40 points);
- Importance to conservation of marine mammals or marine ecosystems (30 points); and
- Likelihood of success, based on general reasonableness of approach and expected costs and, if applicable, past performance on Commission-sponsored projects (30 points).

**Pre-proposal format:** Pre-proposals are limited to two pages in normal (12 point) font—any additional information will be discarded (i.e., do not send supportive material or additional documents of any kind). Each pre-proposal should include the following:

- Title of project;
- Names of applicants and contact information (address, phone, and email) for the principal investigator;
- Description of conservation problem or issue being addressed with reference to Commission priorities listed above;
- General approach to be used;
- Utility of the research for advancing science and management related to marine mammals and the expected outcome of the work;
- Expected cost and time frame; and
- Current or pending support for the project from other funding agencies or collaborating institutions, if applicable.

Investigators will be notified by e-mail as to whether their pre-proposal has been accepted. Investigators whose pre-proposals have been accepted will be invited to submit a full proposal.

**Selection criteria for full proposals:** Full proposals should be submitted only after an investigator has been notified that his or her pre-proposal has been accepted. These proposals will be evaluated using the normal consultative process of the Marine Mammal Commission with its Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals and Commission staff. The following factors will be considered in reviewing full proposals (relative weights are indicated by point values that sum to 100):

- Relevance to Commission priorities identified above (30 points);
- Whether proposed projects will have broad implications for important conservation purposes, or will lead to new perspectives on means to achieve the goals of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (20 points);
- Likelihood that proposed projects will augment, in a meaningful way, the current research, management, or conservation activities of other agencies and organizations (15 points);

- Past success on similar projects conducted by the principal investigators (15 points);
- Adequacy of scientific design for achieving study objectives (10 points);
- Reasonableness of expected costs relative to study design and objectives (5 points); and
- Completeness of the proposal (5 points).

Commission staff will provide recommendations for funding to the Commissioners based on the relative rank of each full proposal. The Commissioners will make the final determination regarding each proposal based on their assessment of the combination of research that will most effectively promote the conservation and management goals of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

**Full proposal format:**

Investigators who are invited to submit a full proposal must use the following format. Full proposals must not exceed a maximum of 8 pages using a normal (12 point) font.

**Title and Principal Investigators**—Include contact information (address, phone, and email) for the principal investigator.

**Abstract**—Provide an abstract of the proposal summarizing the problem or question to be addressed, the methods to be used to address the problem or question, possible outcomes of the work, and the utility of the research for advancing science and management related to marine mammals. Please limit the abstract to approximately 200 words.

**Introduction, Background, or Problem Statement**—Provide a brief description of the issue or problem to be addressed. What is the problem and why is the research important? How does the research relate to Commission priorities identified above?

**Goals and Objectives**—Provide a statement of the general or broad goal of the proposed research and the specific objectives that will be addressed to achieve that goal.

**Methods**—Provide a detailed description of the methods of the investigation, so that the reviewer can understand how you will address each of the specific objectives. If you are testing a null hypothesis, describe the power of your method to detect a significant alternative hypothesis. If your work is largely descriptive, characterize the activity, behavior, or issue being investigated and the assessment methods.

**Possible Outcomes**—Describe the outcomes that you think are possible or likely.

**Research and Management Utility**—Describe the utility of the project and its implications for future research, management, or conservation of the subject species (single or multiple) and the ecosystem.

**Project Evaluation**—Describe how you will assess the success of your study.

**Products**—Describe the anticipated products of your study (papers, talks, guidelines, etc.). In most cases, the Commission prefers study results to be published in peer-reviewed literature.

**Budget and Time Line**—Describe your budget and time line, providing sufficient detail to inform the reviewer of expenses or costs by general category (salary, equipment, supplies, travel, publication, overhead, miscellaneous). Include information on other sources of funding for the project, if applicable.

**Research Team Qualifications**—Provide a brief description of the principal investigators for the project (i.e., one paragraph each), including their experience or expertise related to the subject proposal. Include full contact information for all principal investigators, including mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address. Do not send full CVs

**Submission process:** Pre-proposals should be submitted electronically in MS Word, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF format to Alyssa Campbell, Scientific Program Staff Assistant, at the Marine Mammal Commission, email address [acampbell@mmc.gov](mailto:acampbell@mmc.gov).

**Timing of submission and review process:**

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| <b>20 May 2005; 5:00 P.M. E.D.T.</b>  | Deadline for pre-proposal submission.                    |
| <b>3 June 2005; 5:00 P.M. E.D.T.</b>  | Notification sent to successful pre-proposal applicants. |
| <b>1 July 2005; 5:00 P.M. E.D.T.</b>  | Full proposals due to the Marine Mammal Commission.      |
| <b>22 July 2005; 5:00 P.M. E.D.T.</b> | Successful applicants informed of final decisions.       |

**Inquiries:** Inquiries should be directed to Michael A. Simpkins, Ph.D., Assistant Scientific Program Director by mail (4340 East-West Highway, Room 905, Bethesda, MD 20814), phone (301-504-0087), or email ([msimpkins@mmc.gov](mailto:msimpkins@mmc.gov), please also copy email inquiries to [acampbell@mmc.gov](mailto:acampbell@mmc.gov)).